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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003465

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [PNAT](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: MALIKI WORRIED ABOUT KIRKUK AND MOSUL SECURITY;  
WANTS CONCERNED LOCAL CITIZENS INTEGRATED INTO GOVERNMENT

REF: BAGHDAD 3180

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan Crocker for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

**¶1.** (S) SUMMARY: Prime Minister Maliki expressed continued concern over the security situation in northern Iraq particularly Kirkuk and Mosul, where he cited increasing ethnic tensions between Arabs and Kurds. Maliki agreed with the Ambassador about successes in turning around many Baghdad neighborhoods, but asked for Coalition Forces to work in coordination with Iraqi authorities to integrate Concerned Local Citizens (CLC) groups into government service. The Prime Minister also gave a read-out on a recent meeting with Sadrist parliamentarians where he claimed to have admonished them about rogue militia operations. END SUMMARY.

**¶2.** (S) During his weekly security meeting on October 11 with Ambassador Crocker and MNF-I Commanding General Petraeus, Prime Minister Maliki once again used the occasion to raise concerns about the security situation in northern Iraq, particularly in Mosul and Kirkuk (reftel). As he said previously, he did not consider the governor, military commander, or chief of police to be particularly strong leaders, hinting that he considered them too biased towards Kurdish interests. General Petraeus pointed out that the political and military leadership there performed a delicate balancing act, especially since Kurdish intelligence had very good sources regarding Al-Qaeda. General Petraeus once again observed that many of the problems on the Arab side were self-induced, like boycotting military service and elections of the Provincial Council. Maliki agreed but said he believed that stronger Arab leadership was needed to overcome these problems.

**¶3.** (S) Turning to Baghdad security, Ambassador Crocker called the improving security situation in the neighborhoods and villages a great opportunity and urged Maliki take advantage of it as soon as possible, especially in providing basic services. Maliki agreed, but said he was concerned that MNF-I -- and not the government -- had recruited the Concerned Local Citizens and similar security groups and they still remained outside Iraqi governmental control. He asked the Ambassador and General Petraeus for assistance in moving these groups into government police or similar units. General Petraeus responded that many of these groups had come to MNF-I on their own offering help and the intent was not to compete with the Iraqi government, but to help them in their recruitment efforts. General Petraeus asked the Prime Minister to expand the capability of the Implementation and Follow-up Committee on National Reconciliation so that it would not be the bottleneck on bringing these groups into government service.

**¶4.** (S) Prime Minister Maliki gave a brief read-out on recent

meetings with Sadrists parliamentarians. He described their admission that rogue militia elements and Jaysh-al-Mahdi (JAM) special groups were ignoring Muqtada Sadr's cease-fire pledge. Maliki claimed to have admonished them for complaining about operations by MNF-I or the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to eliminate these rogue forces; he said he told them they can't have it both ways.<sup>8</sup> The Sadrists claimed that they would help expose the rogue militia members to the Government. General Petraeus agreed wholeheartedly that elements of Shi'a militias were still operating and added that there was strong evidence of JAM special group involvement in the attack on the Polish ambassador in Baghdad last week.

¶15. (S) General Petraeus reminded the Prime Minister that the newly-constructed Al-Qaim Port of Entry (POE) site would open on November 15 and invited his attendance and requested that he order his ministers to hire the needed personnel to allow the POE to open and function. Maliki did not commit; rather, he asked about local Iraqi leaders who would manage the site.

He noted that border and customs positions required honest personnel who did not have ties to any special interest groups.

¶16. (S) Comment: Although this meeting did not break any new ground, Maliki once again used it to voice concerns about Iraqi security leadership in northern Iraq, especially Mosul. He has said before that he does not intend to standby and let security situations deteriorate due to poor leadership as was the case in Karbala during the 12th Imam commemoration in late August (Note: at that time, Maliki intervened personally and fired the Karbala security commander -- his cousin -- on-the-spot. End note). He could be considering a similar, if less drastic, leadership change in Mosul. End

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Comment.  
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